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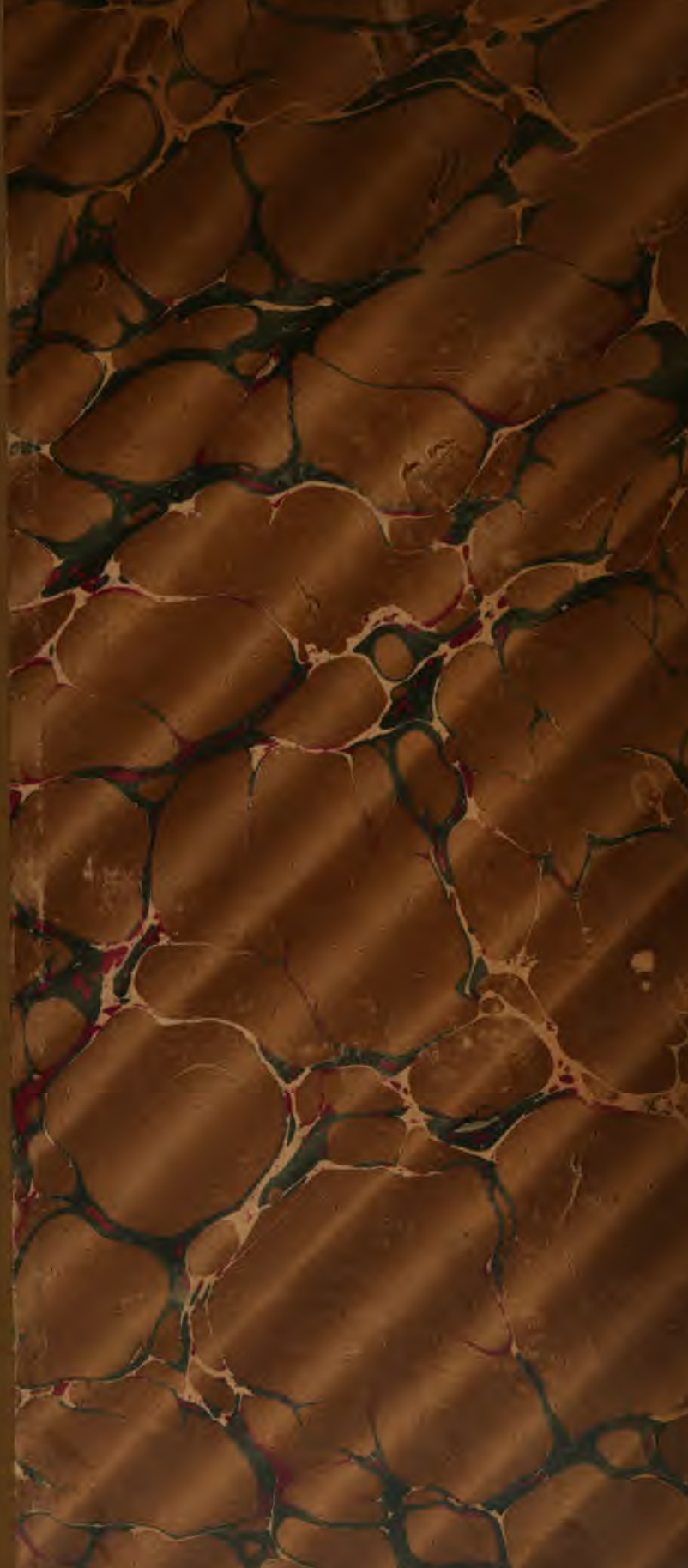
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H. A. H.

THE STATE.

AN ORATION

BEFORE THE

RHODE ISLAND ALPHA

OF THE

PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY,

AT BROWN UNIVERSITY,

SEPTEMBER 2, 1862,

By THATCHER THAYER, D. D.

PROVIDENCE:

SIDNEY S. RIDER, 17 WESTMINSTER STREET.

1862.

THE STATE.

Thomas H. Webb,

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ORATION.

THERE seems no choice of themes at this time. One overmastering thought constrains us, and letters must be subordinate in the scholar's mind to that whose idea is essential to the completeness of all letters and philosophy and religion itself. For God himself, in a very terrible way, is educating us up to the doctrine and appreciation of that noblest form and fruit of society,—THE STATE. Whatever it was needful to think and do for individual development, now plainly, since by great exigencies we are forced to act, is it reverential to think in the direction of the whole. Indeed, the Divine method proceeds in large part by unities, and doubtless one significance of this moment in our history is a recoil from individualism and a vindication of social unity. We are obeying a mighty conservative instinct to preserve and confirm the State. Better, certainly, is it to pray for it, and die for it,—but it is also well to think it out, and enunciate it in high places.

So, then, the State is not a soulless aggregate of individuals, but is itself a noble Life, and we are living in it and out from it. This day we are not so

many men and women with names, baptized or unbaptized, fools or wise, workers or lazy, only ; not so many members of families or of college merely, not even born only in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. No, thank God, we are participants of a higher National Existence. Its larger, deeper pulsations throb within us. Ours is this lofty State consciousness, becoming more distinct, and, please Heaven ! we do not mean to part with it, come what may. This is the moment for us to be in sympathy with the worthiest minds of every age upon this grand theme, from the great Athenian downward, and, with John Milton, to conceive of the State as of "one huge Christian Personage, one mighty growth and stature of an honest man, as big and compact in virtue as in body."

It is a great thing, and worth great sacrifices, to attain the full conception of this. With a comprehension enlarged by the views opening upon us, and made more luminous by their contrasts ; with an earnestness becoming more intense through the tragic realities of this hour, let us then apprehend it, First, as directly authorized in its origin, alike by the revealed word and the natural law of God, not as asking leave to be through some supererogatory compact of men ; but through a certain divine necessity working in the constitution of things, whereby society must crystallize into State forms. Scope enough is left for the human will to act in all responsibility, yet with no exception in the highest of all spheres,—the moral,—allowed to mar the universal order, but anarchy made as impossible as chaos ; and this from honest rudiments, up to most complete po-

litical organization, manifested as a condition of social being, into which men come without being committed as to whether they agree to be governed, any more than whether they agree to be born at all. Secondly, Set before the mind the substance and functions of the State. Its substance is summarily government; legislative, in that it enacts laws out of existing obligations; judicial, in that it discriminates according to those laws; and executive, in that it secures the observance of law. Then its functions,—How high are these? Towards God, it is, whether expressed or not, the mightiest illustration of the Supreme Divine State in which men exist. All our great ideas need to be educated; and this most comprehensive one, that we are subjects of God's moral government, is taught us through the ages by the State. For, notice how it makes us familiar with intelligent will, moving and controlling immense activities, and inculcates upon us, through the compression of our swollen individuality, and the suggestion of our accountability to administered law, that we were formed to be under government, and that true liberty is harmony with law.

But the function of the State towards men is the aspect most immediately concerning us. Observe how various and essential this is. It restrains, ever so gently or violently, with consciousness or unconsciousness on our part. Oh, what would not men do and be but for this restraining force! Again, it protects. Think how the State guards us! Asleep or awake, we are within its outstretched arms, and its watchful eye is ever upon us and ours. Abroad, its mere touch on wax acts like a talisman, and means

fleets and armies, if the solitary traveller be injured, as it says, "Take heed what thou doest, for this man is a Roman." Once more, consider its energy in developing the individual. Its compacted membership, and its organic life, like the action of a harmonious body upon the smallest part, tend to start and sustain all growth. What were man outside of the State? Wherever, by some extraordinary circumstances, he is found in a condition approaching this, he presents the most humiliating phenomena of partial, inferior, nay, stagnant humanity. The animal, or rather the vegetable, predominates in him. But as the vine stock supplies each leaf with juice to fill out its own proportion, so the mighty unity of the State communicates its life to each of us; and our own identity is more distinct, because of this very derived vigor.

The topic which interests us most is, however, the Form of the State. Here, mark how the utmost variety of this is consistent with integrity of origin and substance. The State is too much a creature of God not to be capable of a wide range of modification. In this it must resemble all parts of nature where substantial properties remain through very great changes in outward conditions, and where utility and beauty depend to a great extent on this combination. So is it like art and all mind, and home. So it agrees with the church, which sublimely rebukes all attempts to confine its divine identity within any form, by its manifestation of Christian doctrine and life in so many organizations; and forbids the assertion of immunity from heresy and sin by a painfully suggestive history common to all. In a word, it is

like man himself, who can repeat almost endlessly types of human nature, and yet remain identical. So far, then, from committing the divine idea of the State to the narrow mould of one form, and thus contradicting all analogies of creation and providence, as well as opposing it to all growth of man, the true conception of the State, as Divine, is that which meets all possible exigencies of society, by variety of forms. And this view is confirmed when we consider the manner in which such variety occurs. Thus, a change in the form of the State may be brought about by an imperceptible process going on like some of the processes in nature, or in human opinion. This were the highest conceivable mode, and one which might wholly prevail, were there no inward disturbing elements. Something of this, indeed, we can trace in the histories of States in which, without violence, and even insensibly, the form has changed. Yet another mode is that of constitutional changes, where, with more or less agitation, and under different motives, the acting government conducts its own modification. This, too, is more honorable to human nature, and we have illustrations enough of this in history to show what extremes might be avoided. Then comes the last and exhaustive mode,—Revolution, in which, with more or less violence, and on right or wrong occasions, men avail themselves of the final prerogative in moral beings, to obey God rather than man, and under peril of condemnation, if they mistake duty, accept the alternatives of a struggle, and change the form into what the exigencies of society demand. This, alas, is the more common mode, and is a humiliating comment on the ina-

bility of man to develop harmoniously. But even revolution leaves intact the sacredness of the State. Nay, it is a homage paid by human nature in its wildest movement to government, in that it invokes supremest right, and is an appeal from wrongs and infractions of obligation to the majesty of Law. And this, not with the self-complacent notion that sincerity makes truth and a higher law, and so releases from wrong the simply honest revolutionist; but with solemn acceptance of the same condition which guards truth in the physical domain, where men have to act in the certainty that God holds them under penalty of explosion, and poisons, and all sorts of evil consequences, not to what they *think*, but to what *is* true.

Thus far, all concerns the form, and touches not the substance of the State. As yet there is no such self-assertion as, that men originate their duty to obey, continue it by a perpetually recurring consent, and make it cease by an arbitrary act of will. The aberrations thus far are within defined limits. We conceive of these modes as in the sphere of State transformation, and however much room there is in them for hopeful and sad material of history, we still remain at a wide remove from the abyss where that which Plato held in pure reason, and Paul magnified by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, perishes in the infernal negation of government by Secession. This, then, is the doctrine of the State which we believe is forming into intelligent conception, through the resistless logic of events, forcing us upon high ground.

That our actual State is Democratic, affects not the strength of the idea. Let others hold it under forms

of autocracy, or of constitutional monarchy. We were shaped into this form of Democracy by a process as rigid and sovereign as that which is represented in forming plants out of star dust. We grew into it, as plants grow ; for our roots run down deep and wide into a historic past. Nay, to fulfil all analogies, we were born in due time. We early asserted our national life, not from the deliberating inventions of men, but the necessities of elements working beneath and within all conventions, compelling them to act. The ease and naturalness with which the government entered upon an announced and fully conscious existence, is as sufficient a proof of national life, as the jointed limbs and intending mind are of a living man. The State stood up, one great personality, instinct with organic, pervading energy, and not a company of merchants banded for traffic, nor a ship's crew gathered for a voyage. It took its place among the governments of earth, itself a myriad-crowned Democracy among monarchies and empires, challenging recognition, arrogant, if you will, oftentimes wicked, as other States, yet not without some sense of God ; in all respects, a State, with the consciousness, not of parts, but of a whole, its citizens abroad looking up not to pelican and rattle-snake banners, but to yon broad ensign, floating as far and proudly as the red cross of England. Thus has it continued, hardened into unity by the lapse and the conflicts of time. The agony of this moment shows that deeper than mere sentiment, or any conviction of interest, the instinct of a national existence has been roused, and merges all questions in its vast vitality. These later movements, resem-

bling in their fearful earnestness the determined purpose of France in her darkest hour, to maintain her unity, are the involuntary proofs of an increasing horror at the unnaturalness, as well as the wickedness, of dismemberment. No! by the tumultuous feelings which struggle in us, and which I dare not analyze, by all the glorious past, and the ominous future, this government passes not away as a shape of air. No palmetto rod tipped with ebony can dissolve it in magic quiet. No conjuror's mouth can utter a spell mighty enough to resolve harmoniously the mystic numbers of the State. If it perish, it perishes like giant Rome, limb torn from limb, of one great body. So, then, we are shut up to this actual American Democracy, as the State whose idea we must cherish, and whose history we must accomplish, something, indeed, capable of disastrous end, but also of glorious possibilities, something for the scholar and Christian to dwell upon and honor, something to pray and fight for, something to live and die for!

And this form of the State is now subjected to perilous trial. At such a time, while the largest thoughts and the noblest impulses will hold us firm to our conclusions, there are narrower aspects and baser feelings which will work in us to weaken them. Let us consider some of these side views. Here, as in every thing human, we must proceed by comparison. There is a choice between sinners, is after all the utmost we can affirm of men. Before God we will indeed confess. Not to Him will we utter any thing but humblest acknowledgments of our abuse of His goodness, of our failure to fulfil the magnificent destiny

He traced for us. Not even in face of our own ideal, will we deny our grievous defects. But when other national sinners make us the subject of a homily on the faults of democracy, we lift our heads and challenge their judgment. Shall France exult over us? or her Guizot use us to point the moral of his next pamphlet on this theme? At what awful expense to the highest civilization has she attained glory and the power of corrupting Europe at will? Dare she to-morrow disband only a few myriads of her soldiers, and trust civil order and "Mon Empereur" to the people? Does she present the fairest conception of the State? Ah, let her St. Hilaires tell us the profound hurt of France, where unteachable Bourbons and impracticable reformers wait the moment of convulsion. Shall Austria lecture us on the blessings of Imperialism, and illustrate its superiority by the benefits to society of the Hapsburgs? Or must we serve all our humility for England's reproof? listen reverently to Lord Brougham's last chapter of his political philosophy, composed in his peerage and dotage both, and accept English glorification of the British empire as the best illustration of the State? We will not review her distant past. But what are her national results, to justify her Alisons' and Blackwoods' assumptions of superiority? It is not a question now of her achievements in arts, and other civilization, upon English soil; nor of what her citizens have accomplished for the world's evangelization. Nothing shall provoke us to forget these; but we are on trial in the world's history; our present impugnors are our own monarchical and aristocratic kindred; and we must rightly compare the

faults of States, ere we confess Democracy a failure, and Democrats sinners above others. What has she to say for her foreign relations? When has that meteor flag ceased to wave in quarrel with some other nation? What great principle of right has she ever warred to maintain? For what high purpose has she kept up her costly armaments? Let the judgment of Europe answer, if she does not set more store by her calico than by the rights of other people. Has Napoleon's estimate of her foreign policy been proved to be harsh? and what alternative have we from De Tocqueville's severe philosophy of England's international morality? Do her eulogists forget that the same age has seen her holding up Bonaparte as the very Devil, battling him to the death for great ideas, and then bowing reverently at his tomb in company with Mephistophiles, his nephew, under a deep conviction of power? Let John Chinaman testify whether she puts justice above the price of drugs. And when she lifts her voice, and cants worse than any conventicle about the aggressive spirit of Democratic States, let India say if the wild Northman blood which flows in us from her, has not urged the English State to conquests which our Democracy never dreamed of. Thus much for England abroad. If it be the necessary outworking of her inward State-life, so much then is there to abate her boasting over others. But what of that inward life? What changes quite on the verge of revolution! Despite her vaunted system of checks, she could not pass her corn laws without making Peers faster than they were born. What is that condition of things which makes her

fear convulsion when a foreign crop fails? and what that constitution of society, where the soil is so disposed of that it cannot feed its own children? But what has the State done for the people? With unequalled resources, how much has she effected in the elevation of her masses? Her pauper list is astounding; her criminal register affrights her own officials; and her plethoric establishment is embedded in a population whose lowest strata are hard upon heathenness. Save for emigration, and that to the very land whose institutions she disparages, what had been the history, ere this, of the English State? Oh, with what feelings must Americans regard England! We would love her, if she would let us; for she is our mother country. Her blood flows in our veins. Her very names are ours; her language and her Christianity. We did not ask her arms or money; but, one word of sympathy with us, in this crisis of our history, had bound us to her forever. Yes, most various are the emotions with which we look at the different aspects of England. Land of lordly pride and priestly arrogance; yet of intelligent and determined freemen! Land of scholars; yet of brutal ignorance! Land where abounds every grace that illustrates Christianity; yet where rank and foul irreligion riots in masses of humanity! Land of gentlemen, whose language and bearing make us proud of our race; and yet of boors, whose degradation might shame us of our species! Land of conflict and triumph too, of constitutional liberty, firm when other nations are rocking; and agitating reform when others are stagnant. Land of our Fathers, that gave us all we have in church and state and

home, all liberty, all high inspirations, all great works of mind and heart, and with them the curse of mammon and slavery, too! Seen from one point of view, behold Britannia, a majestic form, serene with intelligence, the dispenser of Christian civilization to subject millions. We look again, and lo! a hideous figure, the hugest incarnation of Pharisaism, a crowned Tartuffe among the nations, her conscience torpid with opium, her hearing stopped with cotton and her homilies on forbearance choking with the blood of tortured Sepoys! No, we cannot see that other forms present the State in such comparison as to authorize any affectation of superiority on their part. What has the past proved? Alison wrote ten weary volumes in special plea against democracy. He meant to show that its inherent badness was such, that it could not worthily develop the State. He ends with the conclusion which his country's catechism might have taught him; and in his closing chapter dares not affirm any thing more than that the sin in human nature will spoil any form of government,—a very safe assertion, and tolerably modest for a Scotch tory, in review of the troubles which kings and nobles have made in the British islands during their whole history; to say nothing of Europe and the rest of mankind. This, we admit painfully of our mode of making real the State. We are learning more of that sin every day, but then it is only Democratic so far as to be identical, while the largest part is human, and especially Anglo-Saxon.

There is something singularly unfair in the way in which writers treat this question. They strangely omit

to draw even fair inferences from the unworthy exhibition of the state by other forms, while the failure of the Democratic has been judged in advance. Thus what injustice has been done to ancient Athens! But Grote has shown with an exactness which every scholar must prize, and a comprehensiveness and fairness worthy of the historic spirit, that she of all Greece rendered best the idea of the State. The truest conception of the public, the greatest reverence for law, were really found in her Democracy. And now, when this great hour of trial brings out a humiliating distrust of the State as constituted here, and men express doubt of its form, it becomes us to recognize what results of the State have been accomplished during its life of near a century. It is difficult to bear with some among us, who utter their Jeremiads, not against evil in all governments, but our monopoly of it; and this directly in the face of wondrous benefits. Why dwell on them? Can any man who has travelled to any purpose besides pictures and French cookery, or who reads and thinks beyond his small circle of reactionists, fail to see them? Protection to life and property, the well-being of millions, the large provisions of education, the happiness and purity of homes, the great ends of justice answered, the quiet of honest industry, the peaceful tenor of personal tastes and civil order not jostled even by the tread of armed men, and the church of Christ stronger this hour in the hearts of the people than if upheld by the arm of power. May we not refer to a fair proportion of character nurtured in this De-

mocracy? If it has produced demagogues like other countries, yet has it not also had statesmen the peers of any foreign land? If it has brought forth as shallow ignoramuses and self-conceited pretenders, as those who disgrace European letters, has it not also developed genuine scholars and humble thinkers? If it has its knaves in business, and unscrupulous speculators and repudiators of honest debts, to join in shameful fellowship with commercial dishonesty abroad, yet has it not also merchants of as pure integrity and as incapable of base traffic as any across the water? If the bones of American slave-traders pollute the soil of Africa, awaiting resurrection along with men-stealers from Liverpool, yet there too have fallen holy souls, whose sacrifice rises like fragrant incense, and joins, before the throne of God, the offering of precious lives from England! Do other forms of the State boast of peculiar loyalty to a reigning person? yet the state here has developed loyalty to itself, something deeper than personal reverence, an instinct of deference to existing authority, something higher than sentiment a principle of obedience to law the rich and poor rising to maintain government, and with the past thrilling them, meaning to maintain it at every cost. Surely, these are fair fruits of the State! Nor has any thing occurred in this present exigency, which might not have happened in any other form. The species of ambitious men who would rather reign in hell than serve in heaven, is not peculiar to democratic institutions. If slavery be a fruitful source of trouble here, so might it be in any government. If the local independence of parts of the country, as ex-

pressed in the theory of extravagant state rights, the practice of secession, against which some provision was made, which years ago De Tocqueville pointed out, and of whose danger our noblest fathers warned us, has at last, after divers manifestations, swollen into this monstrous self-assertion, under the fever heat of slavery, and is the real peril of this hour; yet this too, is not the especial defect of Democracy. It has been, and is fruitful in other forms. How long was Great Britain in consolidating her unity? Nay, it is not secure yet. Witness the necessity of transplanting the Celtic Irish, and colonizing Ireland from England and Scotland. It was longer yet before the boasted unity of France was complete; and the terrible chapter of La Vendée is yet recent. Recall the war of the Sonderbund in Switzerland,—the struggle nearest like ours, and full of instruction how soonest to end it. Spain has had her experience; Germany must do something more than *sing* “Ein Deutschland,” before she becomes so; and Italy too, even after the solemn vote and bloody welding together of her beautiful provinces, must overcome various repulsions ere she grows into one kingdom. No! this is something common to all governments. We are at one of those points in a nation’s history, which all must reach, when the elements are either to settle into firmer compactness, or disintegrate more entirely.

Doubtless the question is made more difficult by slavery; but the issue turns on the inward force of the state to fuse these elements. Our fathers tried to spare us this crisis; but it has come upon us, and we must meet it. But when in comparison with

other governments, men distinguish this as endangered, we look out on this actual earth, and wonder at this peculiar distrust. For this democratic State is not the only one to dread the future! Will Germany shape quietly into the grand development her philosophers and scholars write out for her? Shall the French Empire peacefully descend to the little Zouave who now plays in the Tuileries? Has the future no terrors for England? When the good Victoria sleeps with her fathers, can no contingencies arise? Will John Bull endure to the end such expense for German blood? Believe you he will sing "God save the King," and pay his debts for another George the Fourth? The future! ah, perhaps the world will not last long. Monarchies, democracy, hierarchies and all may vanish from the wearied scene of human wickedness and folly. But if Providence should not accept the suggestions of Dr. Cumming and his impatient folk on the eschatology, any more than it consulted Ptolemy on the creation of the world, and conclude not to burn up yet this magnificent earth; if long ages of history are yet to come, and many an humbling lesson is to be given to national pride that this conceit may be taken out of men, who can tell what form of government shall suffer most before humanity develop the noblest idea of the State? Into that future we look tremblingly, as becometh those who believe in the fearful scope of the human will above and within material forces, in the moral government of God, and his clearly manifested mode of redeeming through suffering. But we look hopefully too, because we believe in great truths to be vindicated,

and in great blessings to come through chastisements. But we do not see how we can improve the prospects of the State in the future, by any change of forms, since God is plainly rebuking men in them all.

Besides, if we take the counsel of European advisers and try a king, whom shall we send for? Bomba,—he is without charge, and doubtless would listen to a call; but I question if the parish would agree upon him. The kindly Alexander has at present his hands full of the slave matter, and we would rather wait to see how he manages that which our autocrats on both sides cannot dispose of. Shall it be the great Adroit on the French throne? Ah! some of the American clergy might have accepted the uncle, but I query if many could be found to consent to the nephew, with his “Ideas Napoleonic.” Shall we import from England? Ah! not one word of disrespect for the queenly English wife and mother. All honor to her for whom Americans will pray, “God save her,” as truly as her own subjects; but then I fear the farmers would not be willing to support all the Coburgs.

A far different question, however, is that which concerns the place of a higher class in the State. For there must be such, and democracy is no exception to this part of social crystallization. Our choice is to determine who shall be the higher class,—the *Aristoi*; and indeed very much depends on our settlement of this. An aristocracy of family is not possible. In England, even, they are sadly mixed, and plebeian blood flows widely in aristocratic veins. But here, where we know each other’s pedigree with

painful accuracy, the confusion is hopeless. The holes of the pit are quite recent from which the most pretentious were digged. Each noble house, unfortunately, like Jonathan Oldbuck's piece of antiquity, has some who "mind the bigging o't." Shall it be an aristocracy of wealth? Yes, rightly, so far as it represents talent that achieved and maintains it; so far as it is employed to refine the taste, improve the manners, and bless society. Indeed, it is only justice to honor the rich who generously furnish means to establish a nobler aristocracy than themselves. But let all men judge if in fact the State is furnished with a higher class, worthy of the social needs, by the operations of wealth! Do the mass of our patri-cians adorn place by gifts of intellect and fine cul-ture and grace of bearing? I will not ask if they have the especial virtues of Christianity; for the world has long since proved that men may be reli-gious without moral goodness, dogmatic without life, and ecclesiastical without being Christian! Do their youth promise the material for eminence? Are they first in scholarly attainments? employing their means for high pursuits? Nay, tell us what consti-tutes admission to the clubs, and drawing-rooms, and alliances of our Belgravias and St. Germaines, besides money and lacquer. Alas, for this type of American aristocracy, which Europe scorns; and to whose simi-an God so many among us sacrifice affection, man-hood, and religion itself! How grimly nature, who will accept only reality, smiles at all our arbitrary agreements, and quietly vindicates God's truth. You may entrench dulness, ignorance, and sensuality within riches; you may call off talent from educa-

tion, and force bright intellects despoiled of finished discipline into money making ; but you cannot thus form a higher class. But shall there be an aristocracy of genuine superiors,—the Aristotelian,—the true, who shall preside by right of the strongest? Aye! a thousand times, aye! with endowments of mind enlarged and quickened and disciplined by thorough training ; men raised naturally above the average, and in such proportion as to be a recognized class, not by any prescription, asking no prerogatives, but simply taking a higher place by virtue of fitness ; from whom may come statesmen and legislators and the professions ; and fitting occupants for station ; yes, indeed, give us such an aristocracy ; for God in his word, and his constitution of society, and in his history of states, teaches us to seek it ; something to which men may worthily pay reverence, and young men look up. This, please God ! if we get through this struggle a State, we will urge as strongly as the education of the mass ; and we will urge it now. For indeed the mass have had great attention to their culture ; and nobly have they approved themselves, and vindicated the wisdom of our fathers in establishing this broad basis of public intelligence. Nay, they will vote themselves schools ; and let them do so ! But the very contrast with the people only enforces our perception of the need of a higher class to accomplish this goodly structure. This is a great want. When we rise above general education, our standard is low. Too much is left to the individual. There is no system to work by even pressure, and elevate any sufficient number, while the instincts of action, and the craving for immediate re-

sults, draw the great proportion scantily furnished, into the vortex of public life. Then add to this, the almost despotic influence of business, the easier eminence of wealth, which absorbs so much talent away from study; and how can we escape deficiency in this part? Years ago, the most thoughtful observer of our institutions noted it, and in a philosophical and kindly spirit pointed out its deformity and danger. Is not this deficiency apparent now? We must look at this in severer comparison than may be agreeable to our pride. The completeness of a great State demands an honest sense of any unfaithfulness to its idea.

But it is not uncommon to hear that the people will never appreciate a higher class; that there are already enough of the right men for all eminence; but that they shrink from the arts necessary to win the public. And then it is not unusual to apply to these actually existing, but unappreciated, capacities, certain famous words often repeated with soft unction for neglected souls, about "gems of purest ray in caves of ocean;" and "flowers wasting sweetness on desert air;" and "village Hampdens;" and "mute, inglorious Miltons;" and "guiltless Cromwells."

Now the people cannot help appreciating a higher class if there be one. God made men to look up. They will always have some recognized superiors. The only question is, what their type shall be. When, in history, from Pericles down, did the mass ever refuse to own the leading of superior men? The strongest must conquer; and the infidel's sneer hides in it the Christian's faith. Create such a class, and never fear that the people will not appreciate

them. But what of unappreciated worth itself? Did you ever know one of these complainers who did not himself, or his friends for him, use arts sufficient to attract the public? And what of unconscious merit? Are men ordinarily so very modest as to underrate their abilities? Do we educate up to such ideals as awe with a sense of responsibility? What office in church or state requires a bounty to induce, or a draft to compel, acceptance? On the other hand, it remains to be proved that any man can be kept out of his place in this roomy world and exciting country. It is easy to find men unequal to their positions, but very difficult to find any superior to them. The divine order leaves not things so uncertain, or the high qualities of men and their uses unrelated. We may be sure that no gems are lost even in unfathomable caves of ocean; and no traveller of genuine feeling ever saw a flower in the desert, or on the edge of a glacier, who did not thank God for placing it there; or who thought its fragrance wasted. And so with men. If there be any Hampdens in our villages, we may be certain they will find full scope for their talents where they are; and if they be really fit for Congress, they need no caucus nor contracts to send them there. Real Miltons too, are never mute nor inglorious. When they come, they bring God's warrant of imperishable song; and you need not have any more apprehension that their gifts will be unrecognized, than that the note of the lark, or the flight of the eagle will be mistaken among the myriads of grasshoppers which chirp and skip along our fields. We see no indication of Cromwells in these parts, among those who

safely declaim most about him. We have nothing of this kind ; the large comprehension, the iron will, the unblenching courage. Our sort are "guiltless," at least, of fight, and only daring on paper. And though doubtless a self-denying ordinance would not be amiss in our parliament, yet who will pass it? Rest quiet ; if there be a Cromwell in the land, he will do all his work, and rooms will be ready for him in the White House, if that be his mission. No, it is safer to accept the humbling conclusion that if a higher class do not lead in all the relations of society, it is because we have not such a higher class, and must create it. God indeed must give the brains and blood to form master minds ; but we have already given the systems of education which we can enlarge and apply to make the most of average talent, which shall produce those master minds. For we read history to little purpose, if we think these shoot up from uncultivated and fallow soil. In vain we echo Carlyle's cry, and repeat Tennyson's poetry about the "coming man." In vain we catch up each incomplete personage whom some glaring accident, some combination of favorable circumstances, or some prejudice of party in our ever shifting scenes, may have thrust into prominence, without basis of genius or stable acquisitions. This is not the stuff out of which that mysterious individual, "the coming man," is made. Not so works God in history. His Moses and Pericles ; his Pauls, and Augustines, and Luthers come with culture as well as gifts. Not England's money nor her pedigree have made her State ; but her higher class, formed of Lords and Commons alike by her schools and universities, have led in arts and

arms the industry and energy of the people, up to her present greatness. The forming men in our own early history constituted such a class in the then existing proportions of society; and they who look for men equal to the grave emergencies and ordinary concerns of public life to arise spontaneously from an unprepared soil, ought to have learned better by this time. We hear a great deal of self-made men; but save as all truly educated men are such, let the experience of every department in life answer if self-made men are not poorly made, in every one's judgment but their own. Allowing that genius may dispense with much of the training indispensable to the great average, or rather can appropriate it more entirely and rapidly, yet genius is too rare for society to live by. Meanwhile, the politician hastily extemporized, or merely practised in details of faction, cannot fill the exalted office of the statesman, whose mind has been rendered comprehensive and discriminating by long and generous discipline, and who brings to public affairs the experience of history, and the practice of States. Again, the man who is so little acquainted with the works of older and better thinkers, as to put forth his own crude speculations with the assumption of original thought, and the confidence of ultimate truth, cannot meet those intellectual wants which demand in the highest exercise of mind an exhaustive acquaintance with past philosophy and science. Nor so long as society has needs which create and continue the several professions, can any thing short of a high standard suffice for the worthy idea of the State we are contemplating. What is more humiliating and mischievous

than the various caricatures of the physician's noble calling, whose very completeness implies a long and reverential study of nature? And what can take the place in the community of a body of accomplished advocates and jurists? There is no brighter record in history of regard for constitutional freedom than can be shown by the superior class of lawyers. They have withstood alike kingly prerogatives and popular lawlessness, in moments of greatest peril to liberty. Woe indeed to the State, if a low standard in this profession expose it to the assaults of the destructive, and substitute the changing will of the mass for the firm embodiment of justice, and the tranquil voice of law. There is no time now for a worthy plea in behalf of a highly educated ministry. But it is enough to say, that in a country where sacred conventionalisms cannot stand the pressure of actual moral wants, we may be sure that no embryo, partial gifts, no phosphorescent rhetoric, no imperfect culture can meet the exigencies of truth, and faith, which require men trained in severest discipline of mind and heart, who shall not have to go out of their absorbing work for mental stimulus; whose awful ideal of pastoral excellence shall keep them engrossed and humble; and whose "*Nolo episcopari*" in the smallest parish shall be felt as truly as in the largest field of Christendom.

Yes, we admit this great need. Who is there in this hour, when the people are honoring popular education so nobly, but must feel the want of a fitting climax to that education? Who will not comprehend in his idea of the State, this essential part? Surely, this is the place to utter the claims of a

higher class of educated men. You will respond to it. Aye, by our conscious defects, let us seek to raise others to a worthier capacity. That great conception of a State, now working out in agony, calls for this at our hands. This is no episode in history, no struggle of an hour ; but itself the inevitable development of the past, it is the forming of a vast future. Let us build while we fight. Give those coming years of the Republic a higher class to guide their course and represent their destinies. If sacrifice be demanded, then let it be of men worth the offering ; for we live in a world where no great good comes but through sacrifice, whether it be for the salvation of men, or for the redemption of a nation. As there is nothing in the Democratic form of the State which encloses our national life, to forbid the very highest excellence of this part, so may it increase its central force without disturbing its essential structure. The very efforts it puts forth to preserve itself may consolidate the State. Every violent pressure may bind its sections into more substantial unity. Each victory and defeat may weld us together more closely. The rapid commingling and perpetual confluence of our armies may soften down the distinctions of territorial lines. The government to which we are giving our choicest lives may be cemented anew with our blood, and become the object of exclusive reverence ; while the place of its occupancy guarded so jealously against the foul conspiracy, may win a regard such as Romans had for the Capitol. Amid the many evils of the camp, may not our young men learn more subordination ; and if at last this great conflict, after

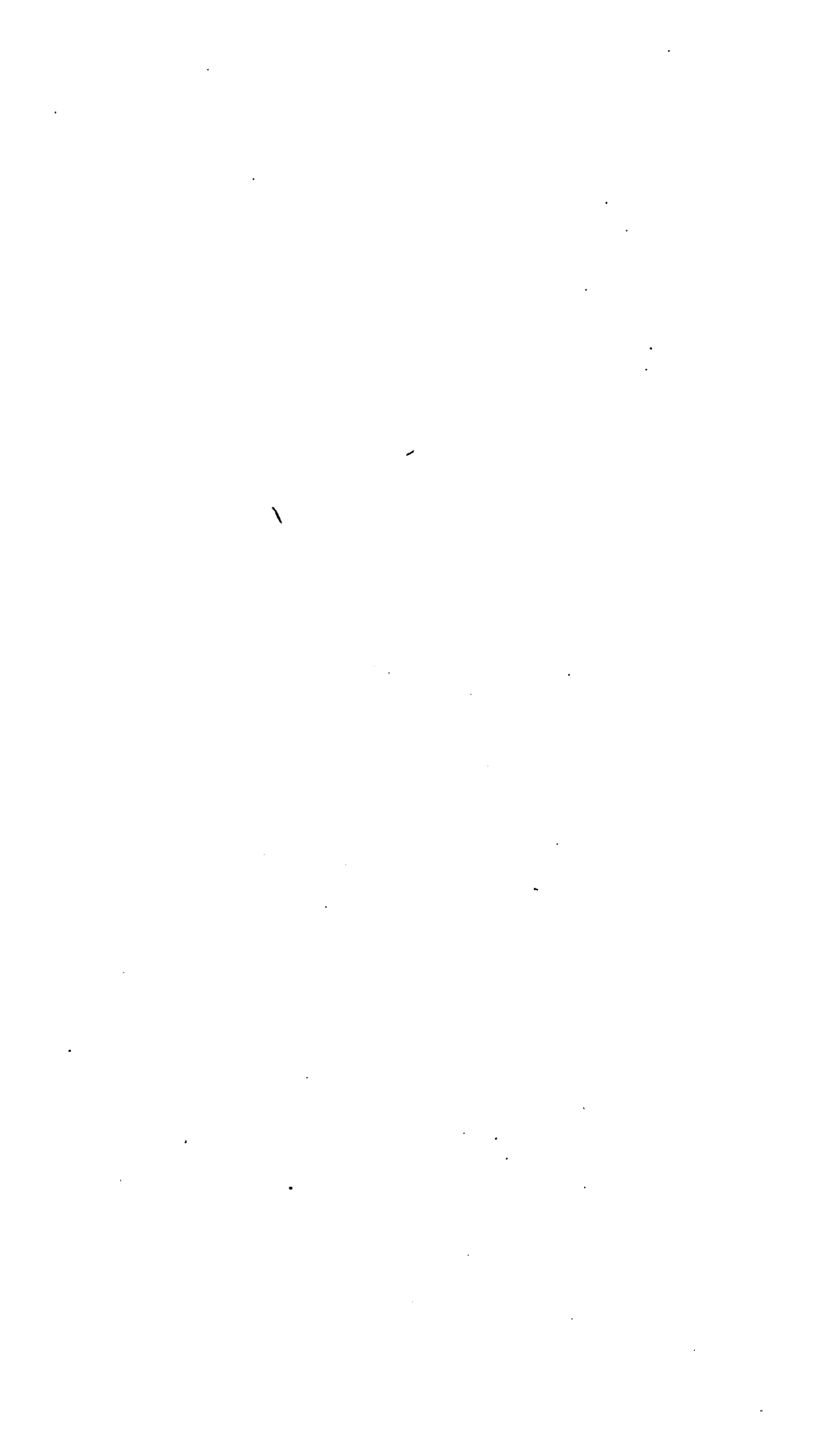
years of suffering, end in the full vindication of government, and the State emerge, worn indeed, humbled but strong, may we not hope from the course of Providence, that all ties of authority will grow stronger, and that in church, and home, and school, and every relation, men will pay more reverence. Nay, with law so terribly magnified, God himself, as He hath done before in analogous circumstances, may visit with His peculiar blessings our people; and in after years, when men tell of the great Secession, they may speak of the great Awakening that followed its rebuke in history.

But of one thing we may be assured, come weal or woe, the State with us must be Democratic. Like it or not, we are shut up to this. The people have the power; they will never give it up. How can we reason differently from the nature of man and the great courses of history? As surely as the man-child comes of age, and takes his property, though he use it badly, so surely must the Demos everywhere rise to government. They know this abroad. It is only a question of time; and what is that in God's vast periods? Hence the "fear of change perplexes monarchs;" and beneath the confidence with which writers assert the impossibility of the Democratic State, is evident the conviction that to this form society finally tends. But here there is no question of time; no possible alternative. We must work out the problem of the State in Democracy. What its proportions and character,—that, indeed, is the tremendous issue with us. If through our selfishness and cowardice, we be proved incapable of the mighty outline so plainly traced out by the Di-

vine architect, and we cannot maintain this unity, then lost to us is the noblest destiny ever offered to man since the doom of God's ancient people. Oh, who wants to live in such a degradation! No great idea of the State, characterizing and pervading all human interests, but every thing diminished and petty; men dwarfed and bitter in sectionalisms; provincial literatures; philosophies narrowed by lines of territory; religion circumscribed by spaces; and communities dashing against each other in endless strifes. Oh, think how those who come after, will curse us! Think how they who shall have waited for our failure, will look on and say, "These men began to build and were not able to finish." But if, rising to the great meaning of this trial, through God's grace we fully meet the emergency and accept but one conclusion,—though it cost every thing to reach it,—then, indeed, life is worth living. Then we shall complete this noble structure, and the State in majesty and beauty shall fulfill its noblest ends and be a fitting sphere for every grand conception, for every human and divine concern. Such we believe to be the lesson of this hour,—to elevate the fundamental dogma of the State to its right place in truth and morality. Yes, the State above individuals, as God above all! To this, His great creature, He is training us to give up every thing. No tie of home is too sacred, no interest, nor joy of self is to weigh a moment in comparison. Other questions, indeed, mingle with this; and it may be while this comprehensive one is agitating, they shall be disposed of. If uncontrollable complications force them into issue with national existence, then, as men

to save a laboring bark, throw overboard things engaged to be carried, why, overboard with any thing that would sink the great ship of State! But now, one overmastering question should rule the hour; no mixed issue, but a grand vital doctrine; no blind, quaking morass of opinions and feelings, but a broad adamantine platform, on which one may stand firm amid factious dictations and dilettanti, declamation and changeful reactions; conscious of truth dear to Almighty God, had in charge by the ages, magnified by the cross of Christ, and vindicated by the eternal judgment. Then raise high to-day the great acclaim of holy love of country. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy!"









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